

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 4106**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

*Leigh Davis*

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:*

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act establishing a farm-to-institution pilot program.

PETITION OF:

| NAME:                         | DISTRICT/ADDRESS:              | DATE ADDED:      |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| <i>Leigh Davis</i>            | <i>3rd Berkshire</i>           | <i>1/15/2025</i> |
| <i>Natalie M. Blais</i>       | <i>1st Franklin</i>            | <i>2/18/2025</i> |
| <i>James B. Eldridge</i>      | <i>Middlesex and Worcester</i> | <i>6/17/2025</i> |
| <i>John R. Gaskey</i>         | <i>2nd Plymouth</i>            | <i>7/10/2025</i> |
| <i>Patrick Joseph Kearney</i> | <i>4th Plymouth</i>            | <i>6/10/2025</i> |
| <i>Francisco E. Paulino</i>   | <i>16th Essex</i>              | <i>5/30/2025</i> |

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 4106**

By Representative Davis of Great Barrington, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 4106) of Leigh Davis and Natalie M. Blais for legislation to establish a farm-to-institution pilot program. Agriculture.

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court  
(2025-2026)**

An Act establishing a farm-to-institution pilot program.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 29 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting, after  
2 section 2JJJJJ, the following section:-

3 Section 2KKKKKK. (a) There shall be established and set up on the books of the  
4 commonwealth a separate fund known as the Massachusetts Farm-To-Institution Fund,  
5 hereinafter referred to as the fund. The purpose of the fund shall be to support the Massachusetts  
6 farm-to-institution pilot program established in section 125 of chapter 128. The fund shall be  
7 administered by the commissioner. For the purposes of this section, the term “commissioner”  
8 shall mean the commissioner of agricultural resources.

9 (b) The fund shall be credited with: (i) revenue from appropriations or other money  
10 authorized by the general court and specifically designated to be credited to the fund;

11 (ii) interest earned on money in the fund; (iii) contributions from private sector entities,  
12 including non-profits, foundations and other organizations; and (iv) federal grants and other gifts,

13 grants and donations to support the Massachusetts farm-to-institution pilot program. Amounts  
14 credited to the fund shall not be subject to further appropriation and any money remaining in the  
15 fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund.

16 (c) The commissioner shall make expenditures from the fund including, but not limited  
17 to, the following purposes: (i) grants or reimbursements to institutions participating in the  
18 Massachusetts farm-to-institution pilot program to offset the cost of sourcing local food; (ii)  
19 technical assistance and grants to eligible local farms to support scaling up production or meeting  
20 institutional procurement standards; (iii) landscape analysis and strategic planning; (iv) any  
21 infrastructure improvements and capacity-building initiatives; and (v) the implementation and  
22 evaluation of the Massachusetts farm-to-institution pilot program.

23 (d) The commissioner shall pursue any additional funding opportunities including, but  
24 not limited to, the following federal programs: (i) USDA Local Food Promotion Program; (ii)  
25 USDA Farm to School Grant Program; (iii) USDA Specialty Crop Block Grants; and (iv) USDA  
26 Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program.

27 (e) The department of agricultural resources shall annually, not later than December 31,  
28 report on the activity of the fund to the: (i) chairs of the joint committee on agriculture; (ii) chairs  
29 of the house and senate committees on ways and means; and (iii) clerks of the house of  
30 representatives and senate.

31 SECTION 2. Chapter 128 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the  
32 following section:-

33 Section 125. (a) For the purposes of this section, the following terms shall, unless the  
34 context clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:

35 “Institution”, any public schools, public universities, hospitals, correctional facilities and  
36 other state-funded entities.

37 “Local farm”, a farm located in the commonwealth.

38 “Program”, the Massachusetts farm-to-institution pilot program.

39 (b) The department shall establish and administer, in coordination with the executive  
40 office of energy and environmental affairs and the department of education, the program with the  
41 goal of informing statewide expansion. The program’s objectives shall include: (i) increasing the  
42 procurement of locally grown and produced agricultural products by institutions; (ii) supporting  
43 small and medium-sized farms within the commonwealth; (iii) providing technical and financial  
44 assistance to institutions to facilitate local procurement; and (iv) promoting educational  
45 initiatives to increase awareness of local food systems.

46 (c) The program shall:

47 (i) conduct a comprehensive landscape analysis of the Berkshire county and gateway city  
48 pilot programs’ farm-to-institution value chain, identifying gaps in processing, transportation and  
49 storage infrastructure, as well as opportunities for institutional procurement;

50 (ii) develop a strategic plan to create scalable farm-to-institution models that can be  
51 implemented in other regions of the commonwealth;

52 (iii) learn from existing farm-to-institution models or add to existing scalable farm-to-  
53 institution models to be more inclusive of existing programs;

54 (iv) provide grants, loans and technical assistance to: (A) farmers to help scale up  
55 production and access institutional markets; (B) middle-value-chain operators, including

56 aggregators, processors and distributors to enhance infrastructure and coordination; and (C)  
57 institutions, such as schools, hospitals and correctional facilities to build capacity for sourcing  
58 and serving locally grown food;

59 (v) implement a pilot program to test and refine strategies for increasing farm-to-  
60 institution sales, with measurable benchmarks for success; and

61 (vi) establish a regional working group of stakeholders, including farmers, institutional  
62 buyers, intermediaries and community organizations, to guide implementation of the program.

63 (d) The program shall be funded by the Farm-To-Institution Fund established in section  
64 2KKKKKK of chapter 29.

65 (e) The department shall: (i) develop guidelines for participation by local farms and  
66 institutions in the program; (ii) establish a streamlined application process for interested  
67 stakeholders in the program; and (iii) provide resources, including training and best practices, to  
68 institutional food service providers participating in the program.

69 (f) There shall be a farm-to-institution advisory committee to guide program development  
70 and implementation. The advisory committee shall consist of: (i) the commissioner of the  
71 department or their designee, who shall serve as co-chair; (ii) the secretary of the executive  
72 office of energy and environmental affairs or their designee, who shall serve as co-chair; (iii) 2  
73 members appointed by the commissioner, 1 of whom shall be from a farm organization in the  
74 commonwealth and 1 of whom shall be a local farmer from the commonwealth; (iv) 2 members  
75 appointed by the commissioner and the secretary, who shall be from an institution participating  
76 in the program; and (v) 1 member appointed by the commissioner and the secretary, who shall be  
77 an expert in public health and nutrition.

78 (g) The program shall prioritize inclusion of small and historically underserved farms,  
79 including minority-owned farms. Institutions serving underserved communities shall receive  
80 additional support to ensure equitable access to fresh local foods.

81 (h) The department shall prepare an annual report that shall include: (i) the amount of  
82 locally sourced food procured through the program; (ii) economic impacts on participating  
83 farms; (iii) feedback from institutions participating in the program and (iv) any recommendations  
84 for program improvement and potential statewide expansion of the program. The report shall be  
85 submitted, no later than December 31 of each year, to the governor, the chairs of the joint  
86 committee on agriculture and the clerks of the house of representatives and senate.

87 SECTION 3. Section 2KKKKKK of chapter 29 of the General Laws, inserted by section  
88 1, and section 125 of chapter 128 of the General Laws, inserted by section 2, are hereby  
89 repealed.

90 SECTION 4. Section 3 shall take effect 3 years after the effective date of this act.